



MARY S. CROUGHAN
Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor

OFFICE OF THE PROVOST AND EXECUTIVE VICE CHANCELLOR
ONE SHIELDS AVENUE
DAVIS, CALIFORNIA 95616-8558
TELEPHONE: (530) 752-4964

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DEANS

Dear Colleagues,

We write to thank you for your effort and dedication during an incredibly trying Fall quarter, to acknowledge challenges that are still to come during the Winter quarter, and to provide a framework for your planning for Spring quarter instruction. We recognize that planning for Winter quarter in-person instruction was just recently completed; however, it is already time for us to plan for Spring quarter. Once again, we will be accepting proposals for in-person instruction with a due date of January 11, 2021.

This Spring quarter, all lecture courses will continue to be offered only through remote instruction. However, we would like to expand the range of other learning activities that may be offered in person in Spring quarter. Below, you will find two important additions to the types of learning activities that we will consider in proposals for in-person instruction for Spring quarter:

1. With spring graduation in mind, we invite proposals for in-person courses for graduating students. Guidelines for these courses appear below.
2. More generally, we invite proposals for courses featuring experiential learning or hands-on learning, and also other small class-size offerings that might have been cancelled in earlier quarters or might be appropriate to hold in Spring quarter. Guidelines for proposing these courses also appear below.

Following are the criteria for Spring quarter instruction modalities:

1. All lectures will be held remotely.
2. Discussion sections and seminars will be considered for in-person instruction under the following circumstances:
 - a. Learning activities at the undergraduate, graduate, or professional level that have a focus on experiential learning, interactive learning, and/or hands-on learning. Learning activities focused on graduating seniors are encouraged.
 - b. Proposed activities must be for fewer than 25 students in a given session with 6 feet of physical distancing maintained.
 - c. Having a defined plan for how students that are not able to attend in person will be accommodated.
 - d. All safety guidelines must be met (6 feet of physical distance maintained, face coverings worn at all times, weekly asymptomatic COVID testing, disinfecting practices, and students, TAs, and faculty complete daily symptom checker).
3. Laboratory, fieldwork, capstone, studio, performance, and other similar courses will be considered under the following circumstances:

- a. Learning activities at the undergraduate, graduate, or professional level that have a focus on experiential learning, interactive learning, and/or hands-on learning.
- b. Proposed activities must be for fewer than 50 students in a given session with 6 feet of physical distancing maintained.
- c. All safety guidelines must be met (6 feet of physical distance maintained, face coverings worn at all times, weekly asymptomatic COVID testing, disinfecting practices, and students, TAs, and faculty complete daily symptom checker).

As before, faculty who wish to propose learning activities for approval for in-person instruction should initiate a request with their department chair using the forms, attached below, and procedures familiar from last quarter. Faculty, in consultation with their department chairs, remain the sole arbiters of which of their courses—if any—should be proposed for approval for in-person instruction.

While we acknowledge that COVID-19 remains widespread throughout Yolo and Sacramento Counties (thus our current status in the “Purple Tier”), we believe that we have a sound justification for encouraging consideration of increased in-person instruction for Spring quarter:

1. As a part of the University of California, and as a land-grant institution, UC Davis is not primarily a remote education provider. Therefore, to the extent we are able, given evolving circumstances, we should make every effort to provide in-person educational experiences consistent with applicable public health guidelines.
2. Since our campus initially transitioned to modified operations in March 2020, we have demonstrated the capacity to create, modify, organize, staff, and execute a wide array of programmatic offerings specifically tailored to our changing environment. These programs range from curricular changes led by the Academic Senate, to shifts in service within Housing and Dining, to the extensive development and deployment of programs and protocols for testing, tracing, quarantine, and isolation that have helped limit the spread of COVID-19 at UC Davis. Relative to the local area, UC Davis has thus far been successful in limiting our positivity rate throughout the pandemic. We believe that our record to date demonstrates our ability to effectively manage this institution and adapt to new circumstances as we move forward.
3. As you know, the Resumption of In-person Instruction (RIII) Work Group has developed a process to determine which courses can safely be delivered in person, subject to guidelines developed in relation to the “tier” system in use by the State of California and published in [*Blueprint to a Safer Economy*](#).

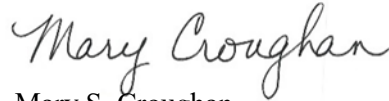
In partnership with academic leadership and faculty from across the university, the RIII Work Group has been refining this process since it was first implemented in the Fall quarter of 2020. Over the Fall quarter, this process, which seeks to balance pedagogical concerns with appropriate health and safety measures, has proven effective, as infection rates have remained low on campus throughout that time.

4. We also acknowledge concerns relating to both the academic success and the emotional and psychological well-being of our student body. Though this is true for all students, we hope to provide our soon-to-be graduates with an engaging final quarter at UC Davis since this cohort of students have largely missed an entire year of in-person upper division instruction.

5. Although we believe strongly that our remote curricular offerings are achieving positive outcomes for students, and while we believe that our faculty, staff, and graduate students that support and deliver that curriculum are doing an outstanding job of adapting to incredibly challenging circumstances, we know that teaching and interacting with students in-person is very different from delivering similar content or experiences remotely. To forge relationships and build connections is a vital part of university life for students, and it is also significant for the professionals that support and carry out the work of UC Davis every day. If we can facilitate the growth of such connections, we believe it our duty to safely do so.

We thank you for considering this request to increase our in-person course offerings during Spring quarter. We encourage your feedback and collaboration throughout this important process. Finally, we reiterate that the health of our entire community is our number one priority. We look forward to a fruitful conclusion to 2020, and a hopeful 2021.

Sincerely,



Mary S. Croughan

Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor

Attachment

- c: Chancellor May
- Associate Deans
- Associate Chancellor Engelbach
- Assistant Executive Vice Chancellor Mohr